

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are presently active in this case, Claims 1 and 10 having been amended and Claims 11-19 cancelled by the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4, 6-8, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Hayashi et al. (US Patent No. 6,490,139, herein "Hayashi") and Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hayashi in view of Sasaki et al. (US Patent No. 6,577,475, herein "Sasaki").

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicants' representative on February 19, 2004. During the interview differences between the claims and the applied art were discussed. Further, clarifying claim amendments, similar to those presented herewith, were also discussed. Examiner Chen indicated that the discussed claim amendments appear to distinguish over the art of record and the Examiner indicated that he would perform a further search upon formal submission. Arguments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

The present response amends independent Claims 1 and 10 to positively recite an insulation layer that was inferentially recited in the pending claims and to better define a relationship among a pair of yokes, a magnetoresistance effect film, and an insulation layer, without adding new matter. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this amendment be entered as it is believed no new issues have been raised.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Hayashi. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Briefly recapitulating, independent Claim 1 is directed to a magnetic reproducing head having a pair of magnetic yokes of ferromagnetic material, a magnetoresistance effect

film, an insulating layer, and a pair of biasing films. One of the pair of magnetic yokes has a magnetic tip at a medium-facing surface and a rear portion recessed from the medium-facing surface and magnetically coupled to the magnetic tip. The magnetic tip has a first width in a track width direction at the medium-facing surface, the rear portion has a second width in the track width direction, and the second width is wider than the first width. The magnetoresistance effect film is recessed from the medium-facing surface and is disposed between the pair of magnetic yokes, and the insulation layer is disposed between each of the pair of magnetic yokes and the magnetoresistance effect film. Independent Claim 10 is amended similar to Claim 1.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 2 shows the pair of yokes 1 and 2, the magnetoresistance effect film 9, and the insulation layer 10 disposed between each of the pair of the magnetic yokes 1 and 2 and the magnetoresistance effect film 9.

Turning to the applied art, Hayashi shows in Figures 17A-D a pair of magnetic yokes 41 and 50, a magnetoresistance film 45, and an insulation layer 42 and 48. However, as discussed during the interview, Hayashi does not teach or suggest an insulation layer disposed between each of a pair of magnetic yokes and a magnetoresistance effect film, as required in independent Claims 1 and 10.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 10 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over Hayashi.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hayashi and Sasaki. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

The outstanding Office Action relies on Sasaki for disclosing a magnetic head having a magnetic tip discrete from a rear portion. However, Sasaki does not cure the deficiencies of Hayashi discussed above. In addition, Claim 5 depends on independent Claim 1, which is

believed to be allowable as discussed above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claim 5 is also allowable.

Regarding withdrawn Claim 9, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 9 depends on independent Claim 1 and according to MPEP § 809.02 (c)(B), Claim 9 should be considered on the merits if Claim 1 is allowed. For this reason, withdrawn Claim 9 is maintained and withdrawn Claims 11-19 are canceled by this Amendment.

Subsequently, the outstanding rejections on the merits are believed to have been overcome, and the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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